

**03-23-2010**

Dear SIC Members and Friends:

This issue of *SIC Clips & Quips* (**Volume 2, Issue 3**) shares some information on several items of importance to all SICs and people across the state.

- **Riley Award Winner Announced!** – **Stone Academy of the Communication Arts in Greenville** is this year's winner of the Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award. The return of the annual SIC conference, "The Power of Many," was a great success with 200 SIC members, parents, teachers, principals, and community members in attendance. And hats off to **Clara Heinsohn** from the Charleston County School District who is the recipient of the 2010 **SIC Advocate of the Year** award. Visit our website <http://sic.sc.gov> for more information about the Riley Award honorees and other conference highlights and watch your mailbox for the next issue of our newsletter, "Council News," for details.
- **Annual "Report to the Parents"** – The annual SIC "Report to the Parents" is required by state law to be issued to school communities by April 30<sup>th</sup> each year. In this Report, we counsel local SICs to share information on their goals, efforts and achievements during the school year. (For resources to assist you with preparing your "Report to the Parents," visit our website, [/publicationsanddownloads/sicreporttotheparents.htm](http://publicationsanddownloads/sicreporttotheparents.htm).) **We ask that all SICs send a copy of their "Report to the Parents" to our office (either by U.S. Mail or electronically) by June 1<sup>st</sup>** so that we can better assist SICs and get a more comprehensive picture of what SICs are doing across the state. Sending us your Report also serves as an accountability measure and provides us with data and information SC-SIC needs to share more about its work and impact on local SICs.
- **The SC House Passes a Budget – What's In it for Education?** – A highlight of the "Power of Many" conference was a legislative update from Dr. Mike Fanning, executive director of the Olde English Consortium in Rock Hill. The final budget for public education passed by the House last week differs little from the Ways and Means budget presented to us by Dr. Fanning and we'll share a few of the key points here:
  1. The Base Student Cost – meaning the amount of money state government allocates per student will be at the same level as the education budget for 1994-95. To give you some perspective on what this means, 5 lbs of sugar cost \$1.25 fifteen years ago; the same bag now costs \$3.05. We all know that gas has skyrocketed and our school buses need fuel to run. The average teacher salary in '94-'95 was \$29,566 and today it is \$47,421. It is difficult to imagine how schools will operate TODAY - with all of the mandates and improvements that have been instituted over the last decade - while state support is dropping back to the same amount as 15 years ago. Some lawmakers called for changes in tax law during the budget debate but all attempts to find ways to raise additional revenue were voted down.
  2. The TERI program that was voted in to law as an incentive to keep retiring teachers in the workforce will be closed to new applicants July 1, 2010.

3. The National Board Certified Teacher supplement program will also be closed to new applicants.
4. School districts will no longer be required to pay for advertising school report cards in the newspaper.
5. All school district costs/expenditures must be posted on the web.
6. \$250,000 cut from the Education Oversight Committee budget will instead go to teachers for school supplies.
7. Charter schools will receive an additional \$700 per child in addition to the Base Student Cost allocation – even if the charter school is virtual and has no building.

Do you see budget items that you agree with? That you disagree with? Do you have ideas about how to move public education forward in SC? Let your House members know what you think. And more importantly, now is the time to talk with your State Senator. Senate committees are now discussing budget issues and **the full Senate is expected to take up the budget the week of April 26<sup>th</sup>**. Need help advocating with elected officials? Visit the SC-SIC website and click on Leadership and Advocacy to learn more OR call SC-SIC to schedule an Advocacy Training.

- **Want to Meet the Candidates for Governor and Superintendent of Education?** – The Palmetto State Teachers Association (PSTA) conference, “Hang Out with the Best!” will feature forums with the candidates for governor and the state’s top education official. SIC members are being offered a special fee of only \$15 for the event being held on Saturday, March 27 in Lexington. Visit <http://sic.sc.gov> and scroll down for details and a registration form. **Be sure to register by March 24 and write “SIC” on your registration form to receive the special \$15 discount!**
- **It’s Census Time** – You may have already received your 2010 U.S. Census form. It can’t be stressed too much how important it is for you to fill this out and return it so that you can be counted. The census directs the allocation of billions of dollars in government funding, impacting important planning efforts, including where we build new schools, roads, and hospitals. An accurate count ensures that programs like Title I, adult education, and special education get their fair share. South Carolina’s 2000 Census mail-in participation rate ranked 49th among the states. According the S.C. Budget and Control Board’s Office of Statistics, local governments lost about \$600 million over the last ten years because of the undercount. We at SC-SIC work with SICs across the state to make sure that they stand up and make themselves heard for their schools and students. With the census, we ask you to sit down – just for a few minutes – to fill out your census form and be counted. Ask your friends and neighbors to do the same. Assure them that the information gathered through the census is confidential and that it isn’t shared with anyone. Also, March 22-26 is Census in Our Schools Week in South Carolina. We hope that you will encourage your child’s participation in these activities and share in them as your schedule allows. For more information about the census, visit the Bureau online. There are special sections there for both kids and teens – [www.census.gov/schools/census\\_for\\_kids/](http://www.census.gov/schools/census_for_kids/) and [www.census.gov/schools/census\\_for\\_teens/](http://www.census.gov/schools/census_for_teens/). Remember everybody counts. The 2010 Census is in our hands!

*Remember, CLIPS & QUIPS is sent to all SIC members who share their email addresses with us. Please print out and share this information with other SIC members who have not received it. We are here to help you, so please contact us any time!*